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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York.

PRAYER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Rev. Dr. James L. Merrell, retired Disciples of Christ journalist, serving as pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ, St. Louis, MO.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Creator God, source of all things in heaven and on Earth, give wisdom and strength to those who seek. We come today with fresh anticipation. We assemble in this place where history is made, knowing that Your presence has guided those serving here so faithfully in challenging decades past. We give thanks that Your sure and merciful hand continues to uphold the life of our blessed Nation. We are grateful for the light and love You never fail to show to those who accept their calling as Senators. Now we would ask You to continue empowering this body to make decisions in keeping with Your purpose. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, October 15, 2009.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Madam President, under my leader time, I yield to Mr. LUGAR, the Senator from Indiana.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Indiana.

WELCOMING THE GUEST CHAPLAIN

Mr. LUGAR. Madam President, I thank the distinguished majority leader for the opportunity to thank my friend, Rev. James Merrell, for opening our session with prayer this morning. He has been a very dear friend from high school days onward. We attended Shortridge High School in Indianapolis, IN. He was 2 years older than I and was already well established with the Shortridge Daily Echo, a daily high school newspaper at Shortridge, writing for the Tuesday paper. I was grateful for the opportunity to write weekly for the Thursday paper. We shared experiences with the late Jean Grubb, a distinguished teacher of journalism at our school. Then likewise we were mentored by C.C. Shoemaker, the debate coach at Shortridge High School.

Jim proceeded on to distinguished honors at Indiana University and then

on to the Disciples of Christ Church in his ministry. He was most distinguished as the editor for many years of World Call and then established an additional paper at the Church of Christ on his own, The Disciple. He has been a pastor in St. Louis for many years. He has many mutual friends from Indianapolis.

I am delighted he could be a part of our session today. I greet Jim Merrell as a very dear friend, someone I respect as a clergyman, a writer, and debater. I am thankful to the Senate Chaplain for inviting him to be with us.

I thank the majority leader for yielding.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Following leader remarks, there will be a period of morning business for 2 hours. Republicans will control the first hour and the majority will control the second hour. Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 3183, which is the Energy and Water appropriations bill. We hope to reach agreement that would allow us to yield back postcloture time and vote on the conference report this afternoon. We are also working on an agreement to consider conference reports on the Homeland Security bill and the Defense authorization bill. Senators will be notified when any votes are scheduled.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

HEALTH CARE WEEK XIII, DAY III

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, from the very outset of the debate over

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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